PS: Political Science & Politics Editors' Report, 2019–2020

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INTRODUCTION

PS: Political Science & Politics is in its 53rd year of publication. The editorial team strives to maintain the particular niche that *PS* occupies among the APSA portfolio of publications as an outlet for brief and non-technical articles featuring new research, political science commentary and research on timely political and social events, research into and discussion of the political science discipline, and scholarship on teaching and pedagogy.

PS serves as a primary outlet for research on the profession, and we've been proud to publish important articles and symposia that highlight the challenges of broadening and diversifying our profession (and academia) and combating conscious and unconscious biases in hiring, promotion, and peer review. We feel an important sense of responsibility to provide an outlet for disciplinary debates, but this has also opened up *PS* to some controversy as debates that first appear in our pages spill out into social media. We thank our Editorial Board, the Publications Policy Committee, and the APSA leadership for helping us navigate these discussions.

As examples, we have upcoming symposia on racial equity in the profession; teaching during a pandemic (this is being fast-tracked); and open science and transparency in research. We do not expect that every reader will agree with the conclusions reached by the authors of these articles, but we are proud *PS* is able to feature these discussions—and responses—that are critical to the profession.

Symposia have become a major part of the content published in *PS* and the Altmetric scores and other social media discussions indicate these are popular with our readership. Because symposia focus on special topics, we have developed a process to partner with guest editors, both to be able to draw upon their subject matter expertise and to help identify potential Board members and possibly candidates for editorial positions. This year, we have added a few new procedures to help us manage the symposium peer review process. In particular, *PS* has added new checks to assure nothing is issued an acceptance or rejection without close oversight by one of the primary editors (other aspects of the review process are managed by guest editors in close consultation and partnership with the *PS* editorial team).

We are cognizant that our term as editors is nearing completion in two years. With this in mind, we are working to systematize and document the editorial policies and procedures, expand the *PS* social media profile, and work with the APSA Council's Publications Policy Committee to lay the groundwork for a smooth transition to the next editorial team.

We also continue to advocate for regular communications between the managing editors for all the APSA journals and standardized reporting on the demographics of our submission and peer review process across all the journals. We believe this communication would improve the ability of the Council and members of the profession to review and compare performance and evaluation, as well as reducing the load for editorial teams.

Among the other things we have done this year to start to prepare for the editorial transition:

- Put in place a data deposit policy to improve replicability and transparency;
- Continued to systematize submission and peer review policies for symposia;
- Continued to reach out to underrepresented scholars, scholars outside the United States, and scholars from institutions with more teaching and service orientations.
- Requested several Board members to extend their term to maintain continuity;
- Recruited new Board members by reaching out to our current Board and to symposia guest editors;

Political science is somewhat unique among academic disciplines because we cannot turn away from a turbulent political world, and some of this turbulence will inevitably spill onto our pages. We urge anyone who has comments, suggestions, and criticisms to forward these to the editorial team at ps@apsanet.org.

PEER REVIEW POLICIES FOR SYMPOSIA

Symposia are an important part of the content of *PS*. Some of our most widely cited articles and articles with the highest Altmetric scores are part of symposia. Symposia provide a critical role in allowing scholars to rapidly respond to current events, controversies in our discipline, and innovations in pedagogy.

This past year the *PS* Editorial team added some additional checks to the symposia and spotlight process. First, all symposium and spotlight proposals are now peer reviewed by a *PS* Board Member and/or area expert and the *PS* Editors. We will, very soon, be administering this process via Editorial Manager, which we hope will improve the quality of the feedback and reinforce our message that all content—including symposia and spotlights—are required to be

Table 1

New Submissions to PS

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Submissions Received	118	101	171	256	174	207	225	151*

* As of August 11, 2020

Table 2

Average Days to Decision in 2020 by Date of First Decision

Decision	Avg. Days to First Decision
Accept	17
Accept with Revision	107
Revise Minor	158
Major Revision	149
Reject	108
Desk Reject	13

Note: Article Type: Article

peer reviewed.

In addition to the new peer review of symposium and spotlight proposals, we have also implemented a two step process for reviewing all symposium and spotlight manuscripts. Symposium and spotlight manuscripts (1) undergo at least two blinded peer reviews and guest editor review and then (2) a review by one of the coeditors. This has been a bit of a challenge because Editorial Manager does not allow us to create a "guest editor" role which can have limited authority (i.e., the ability to issue revisions but not rejections or final acceptances). We are working with Cambridge to see if we can develop this capability in EM.

DATA DEPOSIT POLICY

PS supports transparency, reproducibility, and replicability in political science research, and we have added a data deposit policy. Authors are required to submit materials to our Dataverse (https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/ps). We do not have the personnel or resources to confirm that the materials provide full reproducibility and replicability, so we would not describe this as a "replication" archive. We support this requirement for our journal

and for other political science journals, and welcome conversations about how replicability can be assured without placing additional burdens on editorial teams or excluding some scholars from considering service as editors because they do not have the resources or expertise to check for replicability.

DIVERSITY EFFORTS

PS supports the diversity efforts of APSA and our discipline, and we are proud that we continue to attract a diverse author pool. More can and will be done.

Along with the other APSA journal teams, we have worked with the Publications Policy Committee to explain how we identify potential editorial board members, and what criteria are part of that process. In addition, this year, we reached out to our current and past Board members to seek out nominations for new Board members.

We have begun to make headway this year in attracting more submissions from international scholars and featuring articles that address the concerns of contingent scholars. We have had 20 international submissions (by country of corresponding author) and worked closely with Ekaterina Rashkova on the symposium "The Global Movement of People and the Representation of Citizens Living Abroad: A New Avenue for Party Politics—the Party Abroad."

We are also particularly excited about three symposia/spotlights addressing issues of race we have been working on this year. Ismail White and Betina Wilkinson's symposium examines power, discrimination, and identity in contemporary American politics. Within the Profession section of *PS*, we have two excellent symposia/spotlights addressing issues of race and underrepresented communities within the political science discipline. Nadia E. Brown and Nazita Lajevardi's spotlight focuses on building, sustaining, and supporting underrepresented communities within the discipline while Matthew Mendez and

Ange-Marie Hancock Alfaro's symposium provides a variety of unique perspectives focused on increasing racial diversity within the discipline. As with the symposia addressing issues of gender, we are hopeful these excellent symposia and spotlights will also lead to an increase in submissions addressing issues of race which have traditionally been under-represented in the pages of *PS*.

EDITORIAL HIGHLIGHTS

As shown in table 1, submission rates to *PS* have grown by 75–100% since we took over as editors in fall of 2014. We appear to have levelled out to 175–200 submissions annually. We are concerned there may be a slight drop in submissions this year due to COVID-19, but at the time of this writing, we appear to be on pace for 200–250 this year.

With the transition to online courses and cancellation of several academic conferences in spring 2020 due to COVID-19, the submission and peer review acceptance rates for *PS* significantly declined. Submission and reviewer acceptance rates have generally returned to the pre-COVID-19 rates, but we will continue to monitor these closely as the fall semester opens.

Publication Highlights of Volume 53

This past year we published a variety of interesting and engaging articles. Below are listed a few of the more notable articles published this year in the pages of *PS* which provide a snapshot of the timeliness and diversity of issues addressed in the pages of *PS*.

Politics Section

- Helmut Norpoth. "America's Largest Denomination: None." 53 (1)
- Andrea Benjamin et al. "Set in Stone? Predicting Confederate Monument Removal." 53 (2)
- Michael Zoorob. "Going National: Immigration Enforcement and the Politicization of Local Police." 53 (3)

Table 3

Submission Turnaround Times

	Received 1st Decision (cumulative)	Received Final Decision (cumulative)	Received 1st Decision (elapsed time between stages)	1st Decision to Final decision (elapsed time between stages)	Final Decision to Final Disposition (elapsed time between stages)
2020 (by final decision date)	110	184	110	74	15

* As of August 11, 2020

- Ellen Key and Heather L. Ondercin. "Women's Political Involvement in the 100 Years since the Nineteenth Amendment." 53 (3).
- Bryan T. Gervais, Heather K. Evans, and Annelise Russell. "Tweeting for Hearts and Minds? Measuring Candidates' Use of Anxiety in Tweets During the 2018 Midterm Elections." 53 (4)
- Ismail White and Betina Wilkinson. "A Symposium on Power, Discrimination, and Identity." 53 (4)

Profession Section
- Michelle L. Dion and Sara McLaughlin Mitchell. "How Many Citations to Women is "Enough"? Estimates of Gender Representation in Political Science." 53 (1)
- Nadia E. Brown and Nazita Lajevardi. "Building, Sustaining, and Supporting the Race, Ethnicity, and Politics Community." 53 (1)
- Gisela Sin and Laurel Harbridge-Yong. "Interviews, Reflections, and Advice from Women in Legislative Studies." 53 (2)
- Claire L. Adida et al. "Broadening the PhD Pipeline: A Summer Research Program for HBCU Students." 53 (4).
- Loleen Berdahl, Jonathan Malloy, and Lisa Young. "Faculty Perceptions of Political Science PhD Career Training." 53 (4).

Teacher Section
- Gary King, Shiro Kuriwaki, Yon Soo Park. "The "Math Prefresher" and the Collective Future of Political Science Graduate Training." 53 (3).
- Claire Timperley. "The Subversive Potential of Wikipedia: A Resource for Diversifying Political Science Content Online." 53 (3).
- Megan Becker. "Qualitative Replication as a Pedagogical Approach to Teaching Research Methods." 53 (3)

Notable Upcoming Symposia

"Teaching in a Pandemic": We received two proposals for symposia on the challenges of teaching in the pandemic from junior scholars. We took the initiative to create a partnership and are working now on a COVID-19 teaching spotlight, guest edited by Michael Murphy, SSHRC Doctoral Fellow at University of Ottawa and Eric Loepp, assistant professor at the University of Wisconsin, Whitewater. We are very excited to be able to promote the work of these two junior scholars and to feature articles on this timely topic.

"Forecasting the 2020 Election": We are currently working closely with professors Ruth Dassonneville and Charles Tien, in partnership with the Political Forecasting Related Group of APSA, to publish a symposium on the November 2020 election. This was the first time that an open call was issued for submission to this symposium (which has been featured in the pages of *PS* for decades). It will require an "all hands on deck" editorial process in August to publish these FirstView in October.

STAFFING AND EDITORIAL BOARD

The *PS: Political Science & Politics* staff consists of a portion of two editors' time and a full-time managing editor as well as a part-time editorial associate. Coeditor Phillip Ardoin is based at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina and coeditor Paul Gronke is based at Reed College in Portland, Oregon. Celina Szymanski, senior managing editor, is based in Baltimore, MD. Henry Chen is the APSA publishing associate. He is based at APSA headquarters in Washington, DC and serves as a liaison between official APSA news and events and the journal. He is responsible for The Association section of *PS*, which includes news of the profession, In Memoriam, and the Gazette. *PS* is further supported by part-time student assistants at Appalachian State and Reed College.

Our current editorial board includes 29 scholars who represent a diverse set of universities and colleges, research interests, methodologies, and perspectives of the APSA membership. As we did in previous years, we are proud to have added scholars who are in non-academic positions to our Board (Natalie Jackson and Thomas Leeper). We believe we are the only journal that has non-academics on the Board.

We would like to thank the members of our editorial board for their dedication and service to the journal and the profession.

New Board Members (pending approval at the September 2020 Council meeting):
- James Druckman, Northwestern University
- Robin Harding, University of Oxford
- Natalie Jackson, PRRI
- Ellen Key, Appalachian State University
- Sarah Khan, Yale University
- Thomas Leeper, Facebook

- Tehama Lopez Bunyasi, George Mason University
- Brian Smentkowski, University of Idaho
- Yael Zeira, University of Mississippi

Continuing Term:
- Maryam Zarnegar Deloffre, George Washington University
- Justin Esarey, Wake Forest University
- Kevin Esterling, University of California, Riverside
- Johnny Goldfinger, Marian University
- Robert Griffin, Democracy Fund
- Robert Hogan, Louisiana State University
- DuBose Kapeluck, The Citadel
- Brett Ashley Leeds, Rice University
- Yalidy Matos, Rutgers University, New Brunswick
- Mary Meyer, Eckerd College
- Sara McLaughlin Mitchell, University of Iowa
- Mason Moseley, West Virginia University
- Barbara Norrander, University of Arizona
- Joseph Roberts, Roger Williams University
- Laura Sjoberg, University of Florida
- Jonathan Strand, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- Dawn Teele, University of Pennsylvania
- Renee Van Vechten, University of Redlands
- Joel Westheimer, University of Ottawa
- Leonard Williams, Manchester University

We wish to thank the following editorial board members, whose term of service ends at the 2020 APSA Annual Meeting, for their service, time, and dedication to *PS*.

- Michelle Deardorff, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
- Kristin Goss, Duke University
- Kristin Michelitch, Vanderbilt University
- Mark Carl Rom, Georgetown University
- Bartholomew Sparrow, University of Texas at Austin
- Mary Stegmaier, University of Missouri

PRODUCTION AND DELIVERY

We have fully implemented the First View production process, which allows us to significantly decrease the time between the date a manuscript is accepted and the date it is published online. Manuscripts now appear within eight to 12 weeks of

acceptance.

While we are pleased with First View, we are disappointed in one important aspect of the process: the ability to control the order in which symposia articles are published. Symposia are usually five to seven articles with an ordered structure. The introduction should appear first, followed by a set order of contributions (determined by the guest editor), followed by a commentary or concluding piece. First View remains unable to control the order the articles appear online. We have been discussing this issue with Cambridge University Press since last year but remain unable to control the ordering of related articles on First View without taking the manual step of "featuring" the symposium on our home page.

PS has a strong working relationship with our publisher, Cambridge University Press. Katrina Swartz, our production manager at Cambridge University Press continues to provide excellent service. As of March 2020, we are working with a new typesetter, SPI, and have faced no problems.

The production of The Association section of *PS* (People, Association News, Gazette, Business sections) is completed in-house by APSA staff, Henry Chen, publishing associate. The Association section requires more layout and design features than the front, which consists only of peer-reviewed content. We particularly want to commend Henry Chen's efforts in creating compelling cover art to promote featured articles.

SUBMISSIONS BY ARTICLE TYPE

About 40% of our submissions in the first half of 2020 were stand-alone articles, and most of the rest were articles submitted as part of an organized spotlight or symposium. Our attempts to create new content categories ("Reflections" and "From the Sections") remain quite underutilized. We plan to engage more proactively in soliciting content for these content categories.

PUBLICITY AND OUTREACH

PS joined the Twitterverse in January 2018. We now have about 2,500 followers and continue to build a follower base. Our handle is @ps_polisci. A typical Tweet involves a catchy phrase or sentence describing the work and a link to the article itself. Often, authors of the featured article will provide the tweet for us to use on their behalf. We try to tag (@) authors who are active on Twitter to increase exposure and allow the authors to retweet the link. The APSA editorial associate runs the *PS* Twitter, in consultation with the managing editor.

We resist pressure to use the *PS* or our personal/professional twitter accounts or other social media to discuss editorial decisions. We do not believe it is appropriate or productive to debate editorial decision making in 280 character snippets. In general, when we are alerted to controversies regarding *PS* content, we describe our general policies, direct individuals to the *PS* web pages, and encourage people to contact us directly via email. Others may disagree with these views, and we would be happy to participate in broader discussions about appropriate use of social media to debate editorial decision making.

The APSA-run *Political Science Now* blog (www.politicalsciencenow.com) continues to feature *PS* content, especially symposia, spotlights, and research about the profession. *PS* articles have been featured in news media and other publications including *Inside Higher Ed*, *The Washington Post*'s "Monkey Cage," and *National Public Radio*, among others. ∎

Table 4

PS Submissions by Article Type

Article Type	2019*	2020**
Article	124 (55%)	46 (40%)
From the Sections	2 (.008%)	2 (.02%)
Letter to the Editor	1 (.004%)	0 (0%)
Reflections	2 (.008%)	2 (.02%)
Special Report	1 (.004%)	0 (0%)
Spotlight	28 (12%)	31 (27%)
Symposia	67 (30%)	33 (29%)
Total	**225**	**114**

* Entire year
** As of July 16, 2020

Table 5

Final Disposition on Submissions, by date of final decision

Volume Year	Accept	Reject
2020*	66.9%	33.1%
2019	72.4%	27.6%
2018	64.6%	35.4%
2017	63.5%	36.5%
2016	53.1%	46.8%
2015	33.3%	66.6%

*As of July 16, 2020

Table 6

Symposia and Spotlights Published in *PS*

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of Symposia & Spotlights Published	9	6	7	10	17	10	9	9
Number of Symposia & Spotlight Contributions	68	60	55	68	120	65	73	75